



Convention, Sports and Entertainment Facilities Director

Michael Sawaya

Michael J. Sawaya joined the City of San Antonio as Director of Convention, Sports and Entertainment Facilities in November 2003. He is responsible for the operations and management of the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, Lila Cockrell Theater, The Alamodome (which includes the Illusions Theater), the Carver Cultural Center, and ground lease management for the Nelson Wolff Baseball Stadium and the Grand Hyatt Hotel with a budget of \$32 million and a staff of 315 employees. Activities in these facilities include conventions, trade shows, concerts, consumer exhibit shows, national and local sporting events, and a variety of civic, religious and private social functions. More than 500 separate events occur in the facilities each year with a total attendance in excess of 1.9 million.

Since joining the City of San Antonio, Mr. Sawaya has led efforts to significantly improve the convention, sports and entertainment facilities through a progressive capital project agenda. Capital improvements include a \$26 million renovation of the Lila Cockrell Theater in 2010, over \$22 million in capital improvements to the Alamodome, and over \$35 million in renovations to the convention center since 2003. Mr. Sawaya currently oversees the \$325 million expansion of the convention center which is scheduled for completion in 2016. In 2009, Mr. Sawaya served as Interim Aviation Department Director during the \$500M airport expansion program that was completed in 2010.

Mr. Sawaya has more than 35 years of experience in the visitor and hospitality industry. Before joining the City, he served as General Manager for Omni Hotels in San Antonio and Indianapolis, IN, and as General Manager of 11 other hotels around the United States. He also has served as chairman of the San Antonio Convention and Visitors Commission, president of the San Antonio Hotel and Lodging Association, and as an executive committee member of the San Antonio Area Tourism Council. Additionally, he has served on the board of directors of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce and on the board of the San Antonio Free Trade Alliance.

Education

- Bachelor of Business Administration, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, 1984
- Certified Hotel Administrator

Professional Memberships and Community Involvement

San Antonio NCAA Local Organizing Committee – Executive Committee, 2007; Leadership San Antonio, 2006-2007; International Association of Assembly Managers, Inc., 2007; San Antonio Hotel and Lodging Association, president, 2003; San Antonio Convention and Visitors Commission, chairman, 1999-2002; Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, board of directors, 2000-2003; San Antonio Tourism Council, board of directors, 2000-2003; United Way of San Antonio, Tourism Division Chairman, 2003; Free Trade Alliance of San Antonio, board of directors, 2003; University of Texas Health Science Center, president's council, 1999-2003; Greater Houston Hotel/Motel Association, board of directors, 1995-96; Greenville, SC Convention and Visitors Bureau, board treasurer, 1992-93; Mississippi Hotel/Motel Association, board of directors, 1989; Jackson Hotel/Motel Association, president, 1989.

Honors

- San Antonio Hotel & Lodging Association, Manager of the Year, 2002;
- Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, Pinnacle Award Winner, 2001;
- Holiday Inn Worldwide, Outstanding General Manager of the Year, 1994;
- Outstanding Young Men in America, 1992

Personal

Mr. Sawaya is married and has two children.